

DECLASSIFIED	
Authority	NND 969006
Ex CO NARA Date	9-13-84

DECLASSIFIED  
PA/HO Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
September 6, 2007

NF  
file  
Libya

OFFICIAL INFORMAL

January 7, 1972

Dear Joe:

Your letter of December 22 rings very sincerely with the frustrations I am sure you are encountering in the absence of decisions or further instructions on the questions of military supplies to Libya.

As disappointing as it may be, I feel I have no alternative but to say that I see little likelihood of change. Having been at least four times up to the Secretary on this matter, Alex Johnson and I do not feel we are in a position to go again in the absence of some genuine change in the circumstances surrounding the problem.

The Secretary's reasoning is thus: The absence of a decision, while it has undoubtedly been difficult to live with in Tripoli, has not brought any marked reaction from the Libyans. No one is able to make a convincing case to him that the absence of a decision increases the risk of an adverse Libyan reaction. This feeling is accentuated by the impression that, if the Libyans for their own reason desire to move against the interests of the United States, they will find reasons to do so, no matter what we do. All of this is accompanied by a feeling that any initiative, such as one with Colonel Yunis, would not be helpful and only tend further to aggravate the situation. The Secretary feels that a negative decision could on the other hand provoke a reaction which the absence of a decision will not.

The Honorable  
Joseph Palmer 2nd,  
American Ambassador,  
Tripoli, Libya.

DEF 12-5- LIBYA  
XR POL 1 LIBYA-45

DECLASSIFIED	
Authority:	NND 969006
By:	CD NARA Date 9-13-84

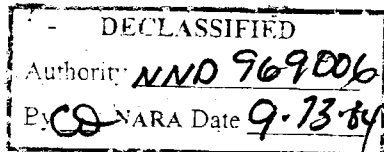
DECLASSIFIED  
PA/HO Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
September 6, 2007

-2-

While, therefore, not wanting to make a negative decision, neither does he feel he can make a positive decision, given various Libyan third country adventures, without running into serious public relations and Congressional problems here. NEA is convinced the Israelis would make a major issue of even symbolic shipments because of the active Libyan support for Palestinian extremism.

The Secretary feels that his instructions are clear and, for this reason has not been interested in further communications or instructions on the problem. We were, perhaps, remiss in not replying to 2167, but, as you can see, there was little more that could be said. There the matter stands. He knows that there are risks in this policy, given Qadhafi's erratic character, and he knows very well of your concerns. In the absence of some major new development, however, or of some compelling argument for being more precise, he simply will not change his view that our best position is the one he has repeatedly adopted.

Insofar as the C-130s are concerned, you should by now have received the report of my conversation with Messrs. Cowden and Monro of Lockheed. I believe they have no doubt regarding the Department's attitude toward a contract with the Libyans which the company almost certainly could not execute. Mr. Bowden, as a good salesman and representative of his company, is determined to get this sale because of the real threat to the existence of the Lockheed-Georgia plant unless its production line can be assured. He has promised, however, to convey the Department's views to the company's management and to let us know what its decision will be. If the decision is to go ahead with the contract, then we will seek the intervention of higher levels of the Department with Lockheed's top management.



DECLASSIFIED  
PA/HO Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
September 6, 2007

**SECRET**  
-3-

You asked about air drop equipment. Our refusal to license it for export to Libya has nothing to do with the proposed additional eight C-130s for the LARAF since the equipment could be used on the C-130s the LARAF now possesses. I see no reason why the Libyans should conclude that the sale of the original C-130s implied a willingness on our part to sell everything else that could augment the capability of the planes.

Warren Clark received a representative of United Aircraft on January 4 in connection with the company's interest in selling helicopters to Libya. By now you should have our cable on that subject as well as that reporting my conversation with the Lockheed representatives. While I understand your desire that we tell United Aircraft or others that we are opposed to the sale to Libya of helicopters having a major military role, I am satisfied that Warren's exposition to the United Aircraft representative satisfactorily reflected for the time being our position regarding the sales in question.

I know how it is to receive a letter like this, but I have no choice. If you have further arguments either for some new initiative or for a new policy let us have them. Meanwhile, we here see little way out of the impasse.

Sincerely,

David D. Newsom  
Assistant Secretary  
for African Affairs

AF:DDNewsom/AF/N:JJBlake:crj  
1/7/72 X22530 & X20455

**SECRET**